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AUTHOR Wilcox, Kathleen
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ABSTRACT

Ethnography, a qualitative, small-scale, indepth approach to research developed within the discipline of anthropology, is here explored as a potential strategy in the investigation of issues related to educational governance and policy-making. The first section of the paper defines the term ethnography and discusses characteristics of the methodology in its application to the study of schooling. The second section offers an overview of the work in educational ethnography to date that is most directly relevant to policy-making. The studies discussed investigate schools from the perspectives of stability and change, focusing on interactional dynamics, on relationships between staff and parents, on the role of educational administrators, and on ways cultural values are expressed in schooling. The third section analyzes the implications of ethnographic research for educational policy-making. The author states that ethnography's primary strengths in educational research include its usefulness in problems of definition, especially in understanding processes of change, in the development of action programs, and in program implementation, evaluation, and modification. (Author/WD)

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THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF SCHOOLING: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY-MAKING

Kathleen Wilcox*

July 1980

* Dr. Wilcox is a member of the faculty of the Department of Human Development at California State University/Hayward. She is also a member of the research staff of the Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance at Stanford University.

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ERRATA

p. 2 line 5	'research'	should read 'researcher'
p. 7 line 9	'ethonographers'	should read 'ethnographers'
p. 8 line 21	'varitey'	should read 'variety'
p. 10 line 11	'picutre'	should read 'picture'
p. 17 line 21	'comparative'	should read 'competitive'
p. 20 bottom	'as superior or inferior.'	should be added after the last line
p. 23 line 20	'classrooms'	should read 'classroom'
p. 25 line 4	should be followed by 'diagnostic testing and individualized instruction, the use of teaching'	
p. 25 line 19	remove the first 'the'	
p. 32 line 6	remove the 'can'	
p. 39 bottom line	'changes'	should read 'change'
p. 42 line 7	should begin with (	
p. 43 line 5	'methodolgy'	should read 'methodology'
p. 56 line 13	'Fillippinos'	should read 'Filipinos
p. 56 line 24	'dynamic'	should read 'dynamics'
p. 59 line 9	'standard'	should read 'standards'
p. 61 line 21	'ready-make'	should read 'ready-made'
" "	'soon	should read 'so on'
p. 62 line 20	'encourge'	should read 'encourages'
p. 64 line 16	'1968'	should read '(1968)'
p. 65 line 15	'ethonography'	should read 'ethnography'
p. 66 line 20	remove the first 'of'	
p. 69 line 27	'Orgainziation'	should read 'Organization'
p. 72 last line	add 'In George Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.'	
p. 74 line 20	'Agains'	should read 'Against
p. 76 line 33	'Anthropological'	should read 'Anthropology and'
p. 80 line 31	'Ibid.' should be replaced by 'Education and Cultural Process: Toward an Anthropology of Education. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.'	
p. 81 line 29	should continue 'New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.'	

INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

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Abstract

This paper explores the potential role of ethnography as a research strategy in the investigation of issues related to educational governance and policy-making. The educational system has been beset by major difficulties for a number of years, difficulties which demand action on the part of administrators and policy-makers. The education of most children, including the poor, minorities, and the handicapped, needs great improvement. Although millions of dollars have been invested in educational research over the course of the past two decades, this investment has not yet brought about substantial progress toward the solution of educational problems or the institution of educational equity. Not surprisingly, there is recent and growing evidence of dissatisfaction with the methodologies and conceptual frameworks which have guided past research: the experimental and large-scale survey approaches typical of the disciplines of psychology and sociology. Concomitantly, interest in the more qualitative, small-scale and in-depth approach of ethnography, the research methodology developed within the discipline of anthropology, is rising substantially. In the interest of avoiding the all-too-familiar educational cycle of infatuation with a new idea, overly high expectations for the results the ideal will produce, and then disappointment and disdain, it seems wise to try to assess critically the contribution that one could reasonably expect ethnography to make as a methodology new to the educational scene. This is the task of this paper.

The paper is composed of three parts. First, the term ethnography is defined, and various characteristics of the methodology as it has been applied to the study of schooling are discussed. This is followed by an overview of the kinds of topics ethnographers have addressed in looking at schools and a discussion of major findings and conceptual frameworks or orientations employed in the research. Finally, the implications of ethnographic work for educational policy-making are considered and continuities and discontinuities between these two spheres of endeavor are noted.

ETHNOGRAPHY AS A METHODOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE STUDY OF SCHOOLING

The methodology of ethnography has been developed and utilized within the discipline of anthropology. As a methodology, it involves far more than a set of easily described and readily adopted data-gathering techniques. Its conceptual underpinnings and mode of use reflect heavily the characteristics of the discipline within which it was conceived and developed. Ethnography is not synonymous with participant observation, fieldwork, or qualitative research. A thorough understanding of ethnography requires an understanding of the discipline of anthropology as well.

Ethnography has been variously defined as anthropologists have tried to construct a research tool, capture its essence, and develop it over time (Malinowski 1922, Kluckhohn 1940, Herskovits 1954, Powdermaker 1966, Berreman 1968, Cohen 1970, Freilich 1970, Wax 1971, Geertz 1973, Pelto and Pelto 1973, 1978, Hymes 1974). Recently, a number of anthropologists and others have attempted to outline and define the characteristics of an ethnographic approach to studying education (Burnett 1968, Erickson 1973, Lutz and Ramsey 1974, Rist 1975, Wolcott 1975a, Burns 1976, Smith and Pohland 1976, Overhold and Stallings 1976, Sanday 1976b, Erickson 1977, Herriott 1977, Rist 1977, Wilson 1977, Erickson 1979a,b, Salomone 1979, Spindler (in press), Knapp (in press), Ogbu (in press)). Wolcott's (1975b) annotated bibliography on method, entitled Ethnographic Approaches to Research in Education, is a useful sourcebook for those who wish to read in this area in depth, as is the Fieldwork Manual for Studying Desegregated Schools, written by Joan Cassell (1978) for the National Institute of Education.

The Science of Cultural Description

Wolcott's (1975a) definition of ethnography as the science of cultural description captures a theme which is basic to all of these accounts. Ethnography is first and foremost a descriptive endeavor in which the research attempts accurately to describe and interpret the nature of social discourse among a group of people. Geertz (1973) discusses the task of description with great sensitivity. He suggests that the ethnographer is aiming at "thick description", in which a wink can be distinguished from a twitch, or a parody of a wink from a wink itself, and contrasts thick description with thin description, in which a wink may be described as the rapid contraction of an eyelid. The thinner the description, the more it is stripped of multi-layered social meaning. Geertz's conception of ethnography is shared by many, in that what is to be described is seen as including both meaning and behavior (Gearing 1973b, Spindler 1974b). One must be in a position both to observe behavior in its natural setting and to elicit from the people observed the structures of meaning which inform and texture behavior. As Spindler (in press) summarizes, the practice of ethnography enables one to discover the cultural knowledge possessed by a group of people as well as the ways in which this cultural knowledge is used in social interaction.

While ethnography has traditionally been thought of as the description of the culture of a whole community, it has been and is equally applicable to the description of social discourse among any group of people among whom social relations are regulated by custom. Classrooms and schools are both well suited to ethnographic inquiry, although the difference in scope and setting requires certain adaptations (Erickson 1973).

The Inquiry Process

One's goal as an ethnographer is to focus on a setting and, in Wolcott's words, to discover what is going on there. One is engaged in a thorcughgoing process of inquiry, aided by certain fundamental anthropological precepts. First, one is attempting to set aside one's own preconceptions or stereotypes about what is going on and to explore the setting as it is viewed and constructed by its participants. Second, one is attempting to make the familiar strange, to notice that which is taken for granted either by the researcher or by the participants, to assume that that which seems commonplace is nonetheless extraordinary and to question why it exists or takes place as it does, or why something else does not (Erickson 1973). Third, one is assuming that, to understand why things take place as they do, one must look at the relationship between the setting and its context, for instance, between the classroom and the school as a whole, the community, the community of the teacher, the economy, and so on. A judgement of relevant context must always be made and the character of this context explored to the extent that resources allow. Fourth, one is utilizing one's knowledge of existing social theory to guide and inform one's observations.

Direct experience in other cultures, or at least extensive familiarity with the cross-cultural literature, is extremely helpful in establishing the first two characteristics of the ethnographic mind-set mentioned above. A familiarity with anthropological and other social scientific thought is essential in terms of the last two. Without this kind of background, it is very difficult to analyze or assess fully the significance of what one has seen. While one may engage in participant

observation without this kind of background, one may be overly constrained by cultural biases and blinders, may fail to see significance in what has been observed, or may focus too much on individuals apart from social context to do good ethnography.

One of the initial tasks in doing ethnography is deciding upon what to focus. It becomes immediately apparent to the thoughtful observer that one cannot describe everything. Even the early ethnographies, which attempted to be extremely comprehensive in their descriptions of the ways of life of people in whole communities, concentrated out of design and necessity on certain types of belief and behavior. As ethnography has developed as a research tool, the scope of focus has become increasingly narrow. Throughout the history of ethnography, however, the ethnographer has had to make decisions about the focus of inquiry. The conceptual framework of anthropology has from the beginning guided ethnographers in making these kinds of decisions (Malinowski 1922). There are many schools of anthropological thought, and researchers have begun their tasks with widely varying topics of interest and theoretical approaches. However, each competent researcher has begun with some sort of scheme, based on knowledge of previous anthropological and other social scientific work, which enables the researcher to select among phenomena for observation and to assign significance to phenomena uncovered in the process of the research.

One begins fieldwork not with a tabula rasa but with a foreshadowed problem in mind. However, the problem is of necessity general in scope. Because one is attempting to understand a system in its own terms, according to its own criteria of meaningfulness, one cannot predict in advance which

aspects of the system will have significance or the kind of significance they will have. Because one assumes as an ethnographer that particular parts of the system can be understood only in the context of the working of the whole, one cannot predict in advance precisely where one should focus. It is crucial to begin the research without specifically predetermined categories of observation, questionnaires, precise hypotheses, and so on. This can be considered a fifth characteristic of ethnographic research. Ready-made instruments and overly precise formulations of the problem are seen to close off prematurely the process of discovery of that which is significant in the setting. An essential part of the research task is discovering what is significant, what makes sense to count (Erickson 1977), what is important to observe. One is continuously involved in a process of inquiry.

The inquiry process is carried out through a series of acts performed by the ethnographer: maintaining and developing one's relationship to the people one is with to ensure the flow of data; employing a variety of research techniques to collect a wide range of data; remaining in the field long enough to ensure that one has been able to observe events often enough to note regularities and irregularities and interpret them with confidence; and so on. Throughout all of this, the researcher is constantly drawing on relevant bodies of theory and knowledge to move the research process forward, to assess the significance of what she/he has seen and heard, to develop specific hypotheses and categories of observation, continually to refocus and refine the process of study. The interested reader may turn to Erickson (1973, 1977), Hansen (1979), Lutz and Ramsey (1974), Ogbu (1974a), Overholt and Stallings (1976),

Rist (1975,1977), Roberts and Akinsanya (1976) and Smith and Pohland (1976) for further discussion of various aspects of the research process.

Methods of Data Gathering and Analysis

Ethnographers of schooling have employed a tremendous variety of methods and techniques to gather data. I will discuss some of the most prominent ones in this section of the paper. Although I cite examples from the ethnographic literature to illustrate the use of particular methods and techniques, the works cited are illustrative rather than exhaustive. The interested reader may consult the series of Case Studies in Education and Culture (particularly Wolcott 1967, Singleton 1967, King 1967, and Warren 1967) for a broad sampling of the use of many different methods and techniques.

The variation in types of data gathered and techniques employed may bewilder non-ethnographers (Mulhauser 1975) since it makes it difficult to define what an ethnography will or should look like, and thus to judge its quality. Traditionally, from the ethnographer's point of view, the gathering of many different kinds of data has been seen to increase the validity and reliability of the study, and the uniqueness of each setting and each area of study has been thought to require a tailor-made set of methods and techniques.

However, Pelto and Pelto (1973) note a general trend in all areas of anthropology toward increasing quantification and operationalization, increasing attention to structured interviewing of samples rather than key informants, and increasing observation of significant behavioral settings. The ethnography of schooling bears witness to this trend, although there is a rather solid resistance to the takeover of a "hard sciences" approach.

The observation process in school ethnography has been characterized by the recording of extensive descriptive detail about the "imponderabilia of actual life and every day behavior" (Malinowski 1922:22). Observers have attempted to capture in concrete detail the conduct of everyday life in classrooms and schools, often recording in longhand detailed running descriptions of interaction within the setting (Lecompte 1978, Burnett 1968). In some cases, ethnographers have developed and employed more structured observation instruments (Wilcox (1978, in press), Talbert 1970, Leacock 1969). School ethonographers have employed audiotape (Borman 1978, Spindler 1974c), cameras (Collier 1973, Spindler 1974c), and film or videotape (Erickson 1976, McDermott and Gospodinoff 1977, Florio and Schultz 1978, Byers and Byers 1972) to increase the precision of their observational efforts. However, these mechanical recording devices are not viewed as a substitute for the direct and active presence of the ethnographer on site. The inquiry process requires the immediate presence of the ethnographer, as one is constantly absorbing a wider variety of data than any mechanical device can record.

Ethnographers also use interviews and questionnaires as data-gathering techniques. Interviews vary from completely informal encounters to highly structured sessions, although the questions asked are almost always quite open-ended. Ethnographers have employed questionnaires for gathering sociometric and other kinds of data to perhaps a greater extent than might be imagined (Burnett 1969, Lacey 1976, Ogbu 1974b, Peshkin 1978, Rist 1978, Singleton 1968). Of course, questionnaires are never seen as the primary data-gathering technique.

Occasionally ethnographers will design instruments other than interview schedules to elicit data. Spindler's (1974c) development of the Instrumental Activities Inventory is an example of the role instruments of this kind can play in ethnographic work. Spindler (1974a) has also used more standard instruments such as TAT's and Rorscharch's in ethnographic research. Others have generated data in other ways, for instance by asking children to keep diaries recording their daily experience in and out of school (Peshkin 1978).

In addition to generating their own data, ethnographers have assiduously collected already existing sources of data. These have included school documents (Ogbu 1974b), cumulative school records (Sanday 1976b), student essays or other student products (Warren 1974), textbooks and other curriculum materials (Spindler 1974c), and almost any other conceivable bit of material which might prove relevant to the topic under study. Since one is continuously attempting to explore the nature of the relationship between the setting and its context, a broad range of materials may prove to be of value.

Similarly, the ethnographer often chooses to spend time in a rather wide variety of settings within and surrounding the school. While observation within the classroom is often the non-participant observation varitey, the ethnographer frequently moves into the role of participant observer as she/he has coffee in the faculty lounge, hangs around the playground, goes to PTA meetings, and so on.

Approaches to the analysis of data depend, of course, on the types of data gathered and the conceptual framework employed. The extent of quantification of data varies widely depending on the study, from none

at all to the use of statistical techniques of varying degrees of complexity. The "key incident" approach has been employed frequently in the analysis of classroom data (Erickson 1977, Burnett 1969, Dumont and Wax 1969, Peshkin 1978, Rist 1978, Rosenfeld 1971). It involves the analysis of qualitative data in which incidents or events have been recorded in extensive descriptive detail. Analysis of the data leads the researcher to focus on certain incidents as key incidents, or concrete instances of the working of abstract principles of social organization. As Erickson (1977:61) summarizes, "This involves pulling out from field notes a key incident, linking it to other incidents, phenomena, and theoretical constructs, and writing it up so others can see the generic in the particular, the universal in the concrete, the relation between part and whole." Erickson notes that the key incident approach may involve massive leaps of inference over many different kinds of data from different sources, including field notes, documents, elicited texts, demographic information, unstructured interviews, and so on.

Another approach to data analysis relies upon the quantification of qualitative data. The two approaches are in no sense mutually exclusive and may easily be incorporated in the same study. Qualitative data may be quantified by coding from longhand descriptive accounts or audio and video records of interaction (Wilcox 1978, in press, Borman 1978, Erickson 1976, Lecompte 1978). Rist's (1970) and Leacock's (1969) work provide examples of the effective use of very simple tabulations of types of teacher-student interaction. Other have begun to use more complicated statistical techniques (Wilcox 1978, in press, Erickson 1976, Spindler 1974c). As Erickson (1977) states, the statistical techniques

that seem most appropriate for the analysis of qualitatively derived data are relatively simple--the chi-square, the Mann-Whitney two-tailed test in the analysis of "categorical" data, and the two and three way analysis of variance.

At the end of the inquiry process, including the gathering and analysis of data, the ethnographer traditionally produces an extensive written report. The report is written in a descriptive style, conveying to the reader the fine detail of social discourse which enabled the ethnographer to see and interpret patterns of social life. Extensive quotes and lengthy descriptions of settings and interactions are often included to present as full a picutre of the setting as possible and to provide validating evidence in support of the ethnographer's interpretation of data.

This, in brief, is the research strategy referred to as ethnography. It is a naturalistic, observational, descriptive,contextual, open-ended, and in-depth approach to doing research. Within these bounds, a variety of instruments and data-gathering tools may be employed. The goal of ethnography is to combine the view of an insider with that of an outsider to describe a social setting. The resulting description is expected to be deeper and fuller than that of the ordinary outsider, and broader and less culture-bound than that of the ordinary insider.

What does this methodology have to offer to educational policy-making in the United States? Given the current state of educational thought, an ethnographic approach reveals two primary strengths. First, in spite of all the dollars which have been spent on educational research, there is still a great deal of confusion, misinformation, and general lack of knowldege about what actually takes place within classrooms, schools, school districts, families, communities, and more distant educational bureaucracies. Sarason (1971), Leacock (1971b), and Herriott and Gross (1979) all make this point. We know much less about the actual functioning of schools and school systems and the change processes that take place within them than we realize. Because we as members of the culture have spent so many years within these systems, and because as members of the culture we possess a body of cultural knowldege about schools and what happens within them, we tend to think we know what goes on. We are unaware of the limited perspectives we have as a result of our own personal experience with these institutions, as students and possibly as teachers or administrators; we forget that we have not conducted careful analytical studies of these systems as wholes. Ethnographers have pointed time and again to the often grossly inaccurate nature of indigenous cultural knowledge as a description of what actually takes place within a system, and to the many contradictions which tend to be deeply imbedded in the indigenous account. For instance, the cultural knowledge of the white middle class in the U.S. generally includes the belief that ability and hard work will take one to the top. It also includes the rather contradictory belief that success is dependent upon whom one knows. Members of the culture have little precise information about exactly who gets to the top and how they get there; information

that would enable them to say authoritatively that upward mobility requires 50% ability, 30% hard work, and 20% good contacts for x number of people with y characteristics, with different proportions perhaps being necessary for z. Instead, members of the culture operate on the basis of half truths, vague propositions, and simple misinformation. As insiders, it is very difficult for them to recognize this. We desperately need detailed, accurate descriptions of what actually takes place if we are to make effective decisions, if we are effectively to guide a process of change. The descriptions, to be useful, must be arrived at ethnographically, that is, based on a dialogue between bodies of social scientific theory and knowldege which point to significant relationships and that which is deemed significant within the system of meaning and behavior of a particular setting.

Second, ethnography offers not only a different way of looking, but also a different way of thinking about what one observes. In any process of looking, one must consciously or unconsciously draw upon bodies of knowledge and theory in order to select a focus and to interpret what is seen. The body of anthropological theory and knowledge that is drawn upon by ethnographers is one which, perhaps more than that of any other social science, tends to challenge familiar ways of thinking. Intense cross-cultural exposure begins to make it possible to liberate oneself and one's way of thought from constraints imposed by the culture. At best, the researcher is enabled to ask questions that no one has thought to ask, to see relationships that have not previously been seen, to note significance in what has gone unnoticed, or to see fallacies in the accounts given by the culture. Sarason (1971:236)

writes:

> If the more things change the more they remain the same, it is because our ways of looking and thinking have not changed... Objectivity in regard to the school culture, or that degree of it which man is capable of achieving, is not won by wishing or good intentions; it is won, to the degree that it can be won, by a willing struggle in which the culture, often our ally, becomes our adversary. Recognizing the adversary gives one a basis for asserting that the problem is neither hopeless nor insoluble.

The theory of culture and the cross-cultural perspective developed through doing ethnography becomes our most effective tool in struggling to think through the veil of culture.

Of course, the methodology of ethnography has weaknesses as well as strengths, particularly as far as policy-makers are concerned. These weaknesses are discussed in the last section of the paper. The next section presents a brief overview of what, given the approach to looking and thinking outlined above, ethnographies have told us about what takes place in schools. Some of the major areas of focus and findings of ethnographers of schooling are highlighted.

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC VIEW OF SCHOOLS IN CONTINUITY AND IN CHANGE

Ethnographers have turned their attention toward the process of teaching and learning in a wide variety of situations and with a wide variety of research concerns. They have looked at teaching and learning in urban schools, in rural schools, and in situations where schools are not part of the cultural milieu. They have observed the teaching and learning process as it takes place across the entire life span in both formal and informal situations. They have studied students, teachers, parents and school administrators; individuals, groups, classrooms, schools, families, neighborhoods, school districts, and communities.

It is impossible, given the scope of this paper, to review the entire subfield of educational ethnography. My comments are confined to work which is, in my opinion, most directly relevant to policy-making in the United States, and I offer examples rather than exhaustive chronicles of work to date. Since the denial of equal educational opportunity to diverse sectors of the population is probably the key problem in contemporary education, this paper focuses particularly on ethnographic work of direct relevance to this issue. There are several excellent bibliographies and annotated bibliographies available to the reader who wishes further exploration of the literature (Rosenstiel 1977, Roberts and Akinsanya 1976, Burnett 1974, Wax, Diamond and Gearing 1971), as well as other summary or critical reviews (Ogbu in press, Hansen 1979, Comitas and Dolgin 1978, Gearing 1973a, Sindell 1969). While most of the studies reviewed here are clearly ethnographic, I have at times mentioned some which have not been conducted strictly as ethnographies but which

have nonetheless produced interesting qualitative observations of life in schools.

Two major categories encompass much of the ethnographic work done to date: the exploration of the school as an instrument of cultural transmission, and the exploration of cultural conflict in the classroom. These general categories include many different strains of research based on a variety of analytic frameworks (Hansen 1979, Ogbu in press).

Schooling as Cultural Transmission

Ethnographers have frequently framed their view of schools around the concept of cultural transmission. In this view, the school acts primarily as an agent of the culture, transmitting a complex set of attitudes, values, behavior and expectations which will enable a new generation to maintain the culture as an ongoing phenomena (Spindler 1963a, Kimball 1974b). This kind of analysis falls within the structural-functional tradition in social scientific thought. Ethnographers have often utilized their contextual knowledge of the culture as a whole to illuminate their investigation of what is being transmitted in schools.

The conceptualization of schooling as cultural transmission runs in direct opposition to the conception of schools shared by many scholars, educational administrators, teachers, and members of the public, in which schools are regarded as instruments of reform and of change. The dominant view of schooling within the culture is that of an institution existing to improve society, not to reproduce it more or less as is. Much of the ethnographic work serves to challenge this familiar way of thinking about schools.

Schools have been seen to reproduce or to transmit culture from one generation to the next in a variety of ways. The common indigenous conception of what is transmitted in schools is curriculum content--a body of academic skills which it is generally agreed the schools should transmit. Ethnographers have focused instead on what has been referred to as the "hidden curriculum," or that which is taught implicitly rather than explicitly. This focus has involved a view of educational personnel as active cultural beings, suffused with the orientations of the culture, rather than as neutral dispensers of information about reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The transmission of that which is implicit in the culture can be thought of as including a set of skills, different than those taught in the formal curriculum, of values, of motivational strategies and goals, of self-images, of relationships to peers and authorities and so on. A working formal theory of education as cultural transmission has not yet been fully developed. While initial steps have been taken (Gearing 1973b, Spindler 1974b, Dobbert 1975), there is as yet no unifying theory or model which guides research. The body of research investigating the process of cultural transmission is therefore quite diverse.

A large group of studies have been oriented around general structural-functional theory, analyzing what goes on in classrooms as reflective of the wider society. Ethnographers have been particularly interested in exploring how the nature of the wider society constrains the educational process.

A number of studies have noted and examined in various ways the influence of the wider economic structure on schooling. Eddy (1978)

offers a general historical overview of changes in organizational models of schooling in the United States and links the change in organizational models to changes in the mode of economic organization. Cohen (1973) suggests a similar link, focusing more specifically on changes within the last 20 years. Eddy notes the movement to the modern corporate model, remarking upon parallels in terms of physical layout, deployment of personnel, management systems, type of work flow, and so on. She describes the values and perceptions which underlie the industrial-business approach to education and the anthropological knowledge which challenges the educational soundness of this approach.

A number of ethnographic studies flesh out the ways in which schools can be seen to prepare students for life in a capitalist industrial economy. Parallels between the structure of schooling and the uniformity and regimentation of industry have been noted and developed by a number of observers (Lynd and Lynd 1929, Jackson 1968, Lecompte 1978, Cusick 1973, Wilcox 1978). These observers and others (Henry 1963) have also likened the structure of power and authority in the classroom to that characteristic of industry. Another testimony to the influence of the wider economic structure on the classroom is the observation of the presence of constant evaluation of student performance and of the comparative ethic (Jackson 1968, Henry 1963). The authority structure, competition, routine, regimentation, time orientation, batch processing, and relative alienation from the learning task that have characterized U.S. classrooms have all been compared with similar characteristics of workplaces.

The individualistic orientation of schooling in American society can also be related to the economic structure. Although Varenne (1977) does not make this connection explicit, his analysis illustrates the transmission of an individualistic orientation in school. He describes his observation of a high school sociology class in which, despite the conscious intention of the teacher, the cultural orientation toward the individual as the fundamental unit of society was transmitted such that the "sociology" had a fundamentally psychological quality.

The significance of these classroom characteristics is more fully appreciated when one realizes that processes of teaching and learning are substantially different in small-scale non-industrial societies (Mead 1943, Fortes 1938).

In addition to teaching common sets of values, orientations, and motivational structures, schools in capitalist industrial societies have been observed to teach students their likely future position in the work hierarchy. In terms of extra curricular activities, the school social organization, with its clubs and elites, has long been observed to mirror the stratified social life of the community (Hollingshead 1949). Stratification by social class and ethnic background is endemic to the economic system, and ethnographers have noted the impact of class and racial stratification inside the classroom as well as out. Lowered expectations and the teaching of skills and attitudes appropriate to the lower levels of work hierarchies have been observed in classrooms populated with students from minority and lower middle class and lower class backgrounds, while high expectations and skills and attitudes appropriate to the upper levels of hierarchy have been observed to be

transmitted in classrooms populated by students from Caucasian and/or upper middle class backgrounds (Leacock 1969, Wilcox in press, Rosenfeld 1971, Spindler 1963a, 1974a, Sennett and Cobb 1972). Thus, it appears that schools are engaged in differential education and socialization based on student social class and ethnic background. This perception is in direct opposition to the common cultural perception that schools are agents of equal opportunity, teaching children from all backgrounds what they need to be successful, if only the children will learn what is taught. It is also in opposition to the conclusions of prominent social scientists (Coleman 1966, 1971, Jencks 1972) that schools have little effect on student futures.

Lacey (1976) and Sennett and Cobb (1972) have explored the impact of differential student success in the highly evaluative and stratified world of the school on students themselves and on relationships among students. They offer insight into the turning away of certain groups of students from the norms and values of the school, and the polarization which develops between those students who identify with the world of the school and those who grow into opposition to it. Henry (1963) notes the economic usefulness of developing large groups of students who see themselves as failures and move without substantial complaint into low-level positions in industry and bureaucratic work structures.

This does not begin to exhaust the list of ways in which schools have been observed to transmit the structures and orientations of the wider society. However, the works cited serve as examples of the ways in which ethnographers have attempted to penetrate essential aspects of the wider culture and to explore the classroom as an arena in which these

essential aspects are revealed. While the ethnographies to date have offered important insights into the ways in which schools may reproduce a stratified society, a comprehensive understanding of the variables involved has not yet been achieved. There is no precise understanding of the types of linkages which may exist between schooling and other social institutions. Wilcox's (1978, in press) attempt to explore the linkages between socialization to work in the classroom and characteristics of adult work roles is a useful example of the kind of work that needs to be done.

Schools as Arenas of Cultural Conflict

Another major conceptualization revealed in the ethnography of schooling is that of cultural relativity. Efforts to understand and to document the integrity of minority cultures have been frequent. Classrooms have been explored as arenas of cultural conflict in which mutual misunderstandings produce learning difficulties. Learning difficulties are not attributed to some sort of incapacity on the part of the child from a minority culture. Topics addressed have included language and cognition as well as conflicts in cultural values, interactional norms, styles of learning, and so on.

Language and the ethnography of language use has been an important topic of research in recent years (Cazden, John and Hymes 1972, Hymes 1971, Leacock 1971a, Aarons, Gordon and Steward 1969). One strand of research has suggested that the vernacular speech of every social group is based on similarly complex structures and exhibits a similar integrity of patterns (Labov 1969, 1972). It is social stereotype rather than objective fact that labels some languages, dialects, or linguistic styles

Hymes (1972 pp. xxxiii, xxxiv) summarizes the practical implications of negative stereotyping of children's language or linguistic styles evident from classroom ethnography:

> If one rejects a child's speech, one probably communicates rejection to the child. In rejecting what one wishes to change (or to which one wishes to add), one probably is throwing away the chance of change. In accepting what one wishes to change (or to which one wishes to add) for what it is to the child, one probably is maximizing one's opportunity for change...It was and will seem reasonable to many for the stigmatized individual to make the adaptation. When we see the great limitations of this approach, what might be considered its large-scale failure, we may find it reasonable to insist on adaptation as well on the part of those who stigmatize.

He continues:

> Attitudes are fundamental, but goodwill obviously is not enough. The best of teachers can unconsciously convey rejection to a black child while favoring a white, simply through differences in accustomed cues for gaining and giving attention... Hence the need for ethnography of the classroom.

It is the ethnography of <u>communication</u> in the classroom, not simply a study of children's grammar or even verbal behavior, which can illuminate areas of mutual misunderstanding and frustration and the accompanying cessation of learning (McDermott 1974, Dumont and Wax 1969). Ethnographers have begun to use film or videotape to capture as much as possible of the communicative interchange for detailed analysis: direction of glances, body positions, speech rhythm, and so on (Byers and Byers 1972, Erickson 1976, McDermott and Gospodinoff 1977). Considerable attention has been devoted to the ethnography of <u>participation structures</u> in the classroom, or the cultural organization of rights and obligations in the face-to-face social interaction (Phillips 1972, Erickson and Mohatt in press, Au 1979). This kind of microethnographic

inquiry (see Erickson and Mohatt, in press) exhibits promise in enabling functional communication to occur in situations where the modes of generating and interpreting language and associated communicative behavior differ between teachers and children.

Ethnographers have also begun to explore the relationship between culture and cognition as it may affect the success of children from minority cultures in the classroom. Just as the process of communication has proved to be totally saturated with culture, so has the process of teaching, learning and measuring the acquisition of academic skills. Although much work remains to be done, major findings to date indicate that different cultural milieus impart different kinds of cognitive skills and conceptual styles (Cohen 1969, Cole, Gay, Glick and Sharp 1971, Cole and Scribner 1974). As with language, the ability to demonstrate a particular skill depends on context (lack of performance in any given setting cannot be taken to indicate lack of competence). Also, the acquisition of particular skills depends not so much on individual characteristics as on the types of skills demanded by the environment. The tasks and activities one engages in shape the kinds of skills that are developed. Difficulties arise for children when schools recognize or incorporate a very restricted set of skills and conceptual styles which does not include those that the children have come to learn and employ. The underlying implication is that there is more than one legitimate method of knowing and of learning and more than one body of significant skills. Attention is directed toward life outside the classroom, where a rich body of skills is constantly being taught and learned. This body of research suggests that efforts must be made to transfer skills learned and used in one environment to another.

Conflicts in values between one culture and another have also been noted (Cazden and John 1971, Henry 1963). Children may have to attempt to function in an alien environment that requires behavior which is in striking contradiction to that which they have been taught to value.

The fundamental issue here has been outlined by Burnett (1970) in her discussion of the culture of reference of the school. She suggests that the school, as an organization which is a part of a larger whole, has a culture of reference: the culture of the dominant segment of the community of which it is a part. The culture of reference, following Goodenough (1963), provides the standards for deciding what is, for deciding what can be, and for deciding what to do, or operational procedures for dealing with people and things. Political and economic factors tend to ensure that teachers are in tune with the culture of reference. Difficulties arise when the reference culture is different than the culture of the students. Not only is the organization and curriculum of the school inappropriate, but teachers as cultural beings who have emerged from the culture of reference are likely to be incapable even of communicating to students, much less of responding flexibly to their needs. Jacob and Sanday (1976) hypothesize a series of undesirable effects upon children resulting from a situation of cultural conflict in the classrooms.

Working from this kind of analysis, ethnographers have begun to attempt to measure the differences between school cultures and home cultures as a step toward creating a common public culture of the classroom (Jacobs and Sanday 1976, Burnett 1969, Sanday 1976b). Kileff's (1975) article provides a hopeful example from another culture of what can happen in a classroom when the teacher is able to act as a mediator

and cultural broker between the worlds of the school and the home. While there are constraints on our ability to bring the culture of the home and the culture of the school into closer alignment, both in terms of our technical know-how and the political realities surrounding the classroom, this kind of effort seems much more likely to lead to fruitful results than do efforts based on the "culture of poverty"/difference as deficit formulation so rampant in educational circles today.

A Micro-Level View of Schools and Change

Promoting effective change requires not only a thorough understanding of the status quo in classrooms and in schools but also a theory of change and a method of investigating the change process. Ethnographers have, directly or indirectly, provided glimpses or extended views of the process of change in schools, and have often worked with, or in some cases contributed to, a general theory of change with regard to the institution of the school and to cultural transmission in general. This part of the paper discusses the contribution made by ethnographies of schooling to our knowledge of the change process as it takes place at the micro level, within the classroom and the school or school district. This discussion is followed by a consideration of the schools and change at the macro level, in which the role of the school as a change agent within the society as a whole is examined.

I turn first to a discussion of what the ethnography of schooling indicates about the process of change as it takes place within the classroom. The classroom has been, theoretically at least, the scene of a series of significant educational reforms. Given the traditional focus

on the teacher-student dyad and on the formal curriculum, educational reform or change efforts have traditionally been aimed at the classroom. A series of reforms with regard to methods of instruction and classroom organization have been introduced in recent years: team teaching machines, the open classroom, mastery learning, and many more. In assessing the impact of these reforms, several important questions arise. Are changes actually introduced in the day-to-day operating procedure of the classroom? How different in degree or kind is classroom interaction as a result of the supposed introduction of the reform? Are the consequences of the reform as intended, or do unintended consequences, desirable or undesirable, arise? If so, of what sort?

The ethnographic work tends to suggest that it is very difficult to introduce significant change into the classroom setting. While a reform may nominally be instituted, strong continuities with past arrangements can be observed, although the ways in which the continuities are expressed may change somewhat. A sensitive and open-ended approach is required to be able to perceive the new form in which the old dynamics are re-emerging. Some of the available ethnographic evidence on this point has to do with the classroom organization, in particular with the organizational form of the "open classroom". The apparent change in classroom organization may not be associated with substantial change in other aspects of classroom interactional dynamics.

None of the studies mentioned below were carried out with the specific intent of assessing or evaluating changes in classroom organization. They all can be thought of as "basic research," and all appear to have begun with a rather general focus. One of the distinctions of basic ethnographic research is that its broad scope makes it likely that data

will be gathered about a substantial number of issues going beyond the specific focus of the research.

One relevant study is Borman's (1978) analysis of the dynamics of social control in two urban kindergarten classrooms, one an open classroom in an open school patterned after the British infant school and the other a classroom with a traditional program in a traditional school. Results of the investigation revealed that, contrary to what one might expect, the teacher in the open classroom was more frequently observed using regulative or control strategies with the children than the teacher in the traditional classroom. One result of the reorganization was that the teacher was more frequently in the children's midst, and as a result was apparently monitoring activities more closely than was the case in the presumably tighter, more controlled traditional classroom. Also there was no observed difference in the type of control employed by the teachers in the two classrooms, when control was coded in terms of Bernstein's (1971) categorization of open and closed or elaborated and restricted systems of control. Both teachers used closed systems of control or restricted language to enforce control. Borman did observe more conjoint (teacher-child) regulation in the open classroom, although it was clear throughout that the teacher retained greater social power. In short, the "open" classroom was not as open as one might expect it to be, and in some ways it embodied teacher control to a greater extent than the traditional classroom.

LeCompte's (1978) work also points to the existence of strong continuities between classrooms which appear superficially to be organized quite differently. LeCompte studied four fourth grade classrooms in

depth, with teaching styles ranging from rigidly structured and teacher centered to open, individualized and unconventional. She found that in spite of considerable variations in teaching style, it was possible to identify a universal and uniform "management core" of teacher behavior which consumed at least 50% of non-instructional talking in each classroom. The management core involved statements of authority, orderliness, and task and time orientation which appeared to arise inevitably out of the structure and content of the school, that is, as managerial demands that teachers must make to get children to perform tasks mandated by the institution in the crowded classroom setting. Even supposedly unconventional open classrooms were dominated by a very traditional management core.

Wilcox's (1978) survey of 32 classrooms supports a view of open classrooms as more highly regulated by teachers than one would expect, while her in-depth study of two first grade classrooms provides additional evidence that open classrooms may have closed systems of control. She stresses the overriding influence of student and teacher social class on classroom control systems, as opposed to the formal organizational structure of the classroom. The superficially more "open" classroom of the two she studied, replete with learning centers, individualized contracts with students, and so on, was actually far more laden with authoritarian teacher control mechanisms. It was also the classroom which drew from a lower-middle class neighborhood, as opposed to the upper-middle class environment of the other first grade classroom. Wilcox's work suggests that the social class background of the neighborhood, and the accompanying social class background of the teacher, exert a powerful

influence on the teacher's selection of control strategies, one which is more powerful in important respects than the formal organizational structure of the classroom.

Studies of this kind raise a number of issues with regard to schooling and change. First and foremost is a glimpse of the complexity of the problem of change and of assessment of change. When is it possible to say that a real change in program has taken place? How is one to assess fully the nature of the change? The number of variables which must be observed to assess the nature of the change is likely to be far greater than may be anticipated by the visionary or the planner of change. It is likely to be difficult to predict in advance which variables will be relevant to this assessment and which will not. The nature of the change, including all of its anticipated and unanticipated consequences, must be fully understood in order to evaluate its educational significance. What is it that children are learning in this new situation? Are they learning to make educational choices in an "open classroom" if at the same time they are more closely monitored by the teacher than in the traditonal structure? To what extent are they learning to make choices if they are at the same time being controlled and regulated in a quite closed and authoritarian manner? These kinds of questions are difficult to answer, but an avoidance of them is an abdication of the responsibility to ensure that "change" is in fact change, rather than a warmed over rehash of familiar patterns. Given the American infatuation with educational reform, and the assembly line nature with which reforms are processed through American classrooms, it becomes crucial to investigate their actual significance in the daily lives of children in classrooms.

Ethnographers have begun to examine directly the introduction of other educational reforms, including multicultural education (Rosen 1977, Anthropology and Education Quarterly Special Issue 1976) and desegregation. Although the work on multicultural education has developed important data about factors affecting the degree of success of multicultural education programs, my remarks here concentrate on the issue of desegregation, since it has received more sustained ethnographic attention.

The desegregation of American schools is a reform which has received a tremendous amount of attention from both educational professionals and the public at large. As a cornerstone of educational policy in the U.S., it is a prime example of a reform which demands intense in-depth investigation of its impact on the day-to-day reality of classroom life. Rist's (1978) ethnographic study of a school undergoing integration is an example of the kind of contribution that ethnographers can make to looking at schools in change.

Rist's study examines a situation of token integration in which a small number of black students are bussed into a predominantly white upper middle class elementary school in Portland, Oregon. The classroom observations of Rist and a graduate assistant point to a major dynamic thwarting the intent of integration: black children in classrooms quickly became effectively resegregated due to the disparity in levels of academic achievement between black and white children. The tremendous value placed on high academic achievement by the dominant white upper middle class culture meant that the black students were immediately relegated to positions of low worth within the classroom,

and remained there throughout the year of fieldwork. Rist analyzes the dynamics in school and society which placed and kept them there, which will be discussed shortly. His observations suggest strongly that until the nature of the classroom experience is changed, we cannot pretend that schools have been meaningfully desegregated. Integration cannot be brought about at the drop of a hat by bussing students from one school to another. It is clear that we need to keep looking in depth to understand the nature of the change which has been brought about and to redirect, refine and refocus the change effort.

Ethnographers have also looked outside the walls of the classroom to the process of change as it is instituted in schools and school districts, and to the relationship between in-classroom events and those taking place in the vicinity of the classroom. The investigation of the desegregation process at the level of the school as a whole has emphasized the relative superficiality of the changes that have taken place. For example, Eddy's (1975) study of a newly-desegregated junior high school, although executed in a very brief period of time, manages to illustrate clearly the persistence of patterns of interaction which support the traditional subordinate relationship of blacks to whites. The school Eddy studied was changed from a traditional junior high school (grades 7-8) staffed and attended by blacks to an integrated middle school (grades 6-7). She writes:

> The transformation of the (Booker T.) Washington (junior high) school into the Longview Middle School represented a claiming of the school by the whites of Royal Palm. The assignment of a white principal to the school was the first in a sequence of symbolic acts which communicated to all that the school was no longer one in which blacks would play major roles... The building of the fence around the school to shut it off from the black community, the

> change of the school entrance so that it no longer faced the black community, and the renaming of the school were additional symbolic acts which reaffirmed the dominant status of whites within the school (1975:170).

Clement's (1978) overview of a series of papers offering ethnographic perspectives on desegregated schools concludes that, while different ethnographies offer somewhat different views of the results of desegregation and attest to the complexities of the situation, they reveal that informal segregation is frequently evident, with black students involved in less prestigious learning experiences and activities.

The impact of administrative behavior on the change process has also been observed. Attention to the administrative component of schools seems very useful in redirecting the inordinate amount of attention focused on teachers and children to a more holistic view of the various actors involved in the processes of change. Rist (1978) investigated the part played by administrators at all levels of the Portland school system in planning and implementing desegregation within the city's schools. He describes the evolution of the tokenist approach to integration and the political pressures involved, and links this approach to the difficult nature of the minority children's experience in the classroom. He investigates the common sense notions of integration guiding the action of district and school administrators, describing the philosophy of racial assimilation and its ultimate impact on the children: rendering them invisible and therefore leaving them without the assistance and support they needed to escape positions of low worth within the structure of the school. He outlines a dynamic in which the taken-for-granted assimilationist conceptual substructure of school administrators,

which remained totally unquestioned throughout the desegregation effort, defeated the program before it ever got off the ground. Rist notes the inability of the principal to help teachers learn to address the academic difficulties of the new students and the inability of the district office to help the principal in this task. People in leadership positions, blinded by their insistence that everyone can be treated equally, were unable to assist the implementation of the program and to perceive and address the particular needs of minority students. Teachers were provided with an ineffective inservice program which appeared to them to level accusations of racism and failed to provide means of developing new teaching styles or historical information about black people. No effort was made to develop a coherent multicultural curriculum. He concludes that an understanding of the managerial and administrative context of the classroom appears to be highly relevant to understanding and interpreting classroom events.

Other ethnographers have included some sort of description and analysis of administrative behavior in their studies of schools. Anthropologists have traditionally focused "down" rather than "up", so there is much more ethnographic material available on classrooms than on administrators and educational decision-makers. Still, the work that has been done points to the value of this kind of investigation. An understanding of the process of governance as it actually takes place in concrete situations, and of the values, assumptions and beliefs which guide it, is essential to an understanding of the process of change (Herriott and Gross 1979). Wolcott's (1973) account of "the man in the principal's office" is an example of an attempt to define and articulate the culture of school

leadership and governance on the most local level. Gallaher (1973) and Spindler (1963b) provide further analyses. Of particular relevance to the investigation of change are accounts of administrative attempts to introduce change in schools. Wolcott's (1977) examination of administrative attempts to introduce a program supposed to ensure greater teacher accountability in one particular school district provides an account of the rise and fall of a reform effort, as well as an interesting interpretation of the culture of teachers and administrators in relation to the change process. The brief case studies included in Herriott and Gross (1979) provide further insights into administrative operations.

Rist (1978) and Smith and Pohland (1974) discuss ways in which educational decision-makers anticipate or respond to surrounding political pressures, with apparently negative educational consequences for children in classrooms. Rist points to, among other things, the negative consequences for minority children of selecting a tokenist approach to integration, while Smith and Pohland describe the local political pressures which led decision-makers to disperse scarce educational resources (computers to assist math instruction) widely across disparate terrain, thus increasing maintenance problems and decreasing the ability of teachers and students to make use of the resources.

The interface between parents and school staff and administrators has also been investigated by school ethnographers. Lightfoot (1978), Wilcox (1978), Ogbu (1974b), and Rist (1978) have all described varying facets of the relationship of parents to schools and the response of staff and administrators to parents. The relationship between parents and schools may be an important one with respect to continuity and change

in schooling, as parents are potentially capable of calling for either continuity or change and of attempting to influence what takes place within the school in a variety of ways. Lightfoot reviews and critiques the literature on parents and the parent-school relationship, describing the portrayal of this relationship as distorted, oversimplified and stereotyped. In her view, the transactional process between families and schools has not really been described from the points of view of all participants; the literature is preoccupied with a view of the relationship emerging from a description and analysis of the perspectives and behaviors of only the more powerful mainstream group. Groups of parents, particularly poor and/or minority parents, are seen as reluctant, uncooperative consumers merely responding to the power of the school, or as uncaring, ignorant, or culturally deprived. The ethnographic data generated so far challenges all of these stereotypes and begins to provide information necessary for understanding, as opposed to judging or condemning, the stance of parents, whatever it may be.

Lightfoot presents, and Wilcox's data supports, a view of parents as systematically excluded from life inside schools, with the extent of their participation reflecting, among other things, their social class, race and ethnicity. Teachers and administrators apparently tend to fear the intrusion of parents into the domain of the school, anticipating interference, criticism, and hostility. They tend to welcome only directly supportive parents and parent groups. The social power and status of certain groups of parents makes it easier for them to penetrate the walls of the school, whether invited or not, and to make their concerns heard. Since the needs of lower class and minority parents and their children

tend to be less well served by the school, and require more substantial change, this dynamic works doubly to retard change: the criticism which may point to the need for change is discouraged across the board, and it is particularly discouraged from those with the greatest need for change.

The exclusion of parents from schools also tends to keep parents relatively uninformed about what is taking place within the school. This too can retard needed change, as Rist (1978) points out. Minority parents in the school he observed tended to be unaware of the stratified position in which their children were placed in the newly integrated classrooms, and thus were rendered ineffective as a force for change.

The relationship between school principals and parents has been described at some length by Fuchs (1966) and by Rist (1978), among others. Both of these studies include descriptions of public conflict over statements made or positions taken by principals with respect to minority children. Studies of incidents of this type are valuable in illuminating issues in school-community relations.

In short, ethnographic data on administrators often portrays people in these positions providing little real leadership and generally avoiding substantial change. Of course, given the holistic perspective and attention to context that is part of any good ethnography, administrative behavior must be viewed in terms of the surrounding structural realities which are likely to account for it. Moving up another level, ethnographers have also turned attention to this broader context in which teachers and administrators effect and respond to change.

A Macro-Level View of Schools and Change

Much of the apparent ineffectiveness of educational leadership and policy-making can ultimately be traced to the constraints placed on the institution of the school and on the perspectives of decision-makers and educational actors by the culture as a whole. There has been a fundamental lack of understanding of the role of the school in the culture, and a vulnerablility to the mystification of the role of the school which is promulgated by the culture. Cultures are well-known for the ways in which they mystify the reality of their own workings. Anthropologists have learned to elicit the cultural knowledge of members of the culture as important data, yet not to take explanations of the working of things at face value. Social scientists studying schools, and educational decision-makers and actors drawing on social scientific studies and on their own commonsense knowledge, often appear to have been taken in by the mystifications of the culture.

As summarized earlier in this paper, many ethnographers have investigated schools as instruments of cultural transmission. The results of their investigations suggest a view of the school as reproducing in many respects the status quo of the culture, with its hierarchical stratification of people according to their membership in particular ethnic, social class or sexual groups. It also suggests the functional necessity of this result for the maintenance of the culture--that this recurring hierarchical stratification by group membership is not an accident but a functional necessity for the maintenance of existing economic and political structures.

The work of Ogbu (1978b, 1974b) and Wilcox (1978) is relevant here

although Ogbu employs an ecological rather than a structural-functional framework and a more dynamic view of the stratification process (in press). Ogbu's studies have striking implications for educational policy-making. Insights gained from his ethnographic work in schools and communities in the United States, his status as a Nigerian-born outsider, and a thoroughly cross-cultural perspective have led him to stand educational thought on its head, as it were, and to propose connections which are precisely opposite to those suggested by the indigenous cultural view. In Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective, he reviews and critiques the standard current explanations of differences in school performance of black and white children: theories of cultural deprivation, culture conflict, institutional deficiency, heredity, and lack of equal educational opportunity. He suggests that none of these theories really point to the ultimate cause of black school failure, although the theory of institutional deficiency, which maintains that the failure of black children in schools can be attributed to the fact that schools are organized to promote success among white middle class children and failure among black children, comes closest. He points out that this theory does not really explain why schools are organized like this, and then attempts an explanation. He focuses on the instrumental role of education in the culture, pointing out that its value has always been seen primarily as a ticket to adult success, in terms of a prestigious job and monetary reward. Drawing on Berreman's (1967) and Bohannon's (1963) work, he distinguishes between castelike and non-castelike minorities in the United States, according to the extent to which status is ascribed at birth, group membership is

endogamous, and the subordinate group is excluded from major portions of the social structure, although required to perform important social and economic functions for the society. He classifies blacks, along with other non-immigrant minorities in the U.S.--American Indians, Mexican-Americans, and Puerto Ricans--as caste-like minorities and emphasizes the rigid nature of the stratification system with respect to these groups, particularly in terms of what he calls the job ceiling, or the restricted nature of occupational opportunities available after finishing school. He documents the existence of the job ceiling for blacks in the U.S., and the relationship of changes in occupational advancement to the job ceiling rather than to educational attainments. He then argues that black school performance can be seen primarily as an adaptation to the job ceiling. The ascribed nature of black status and the existence of the job ceiling are readily perceived by blacks, and this inevitably saps motivation to do well in school. Also, following the Whitings' (1963, 1975) model of the socialization and acquisition of cognitive skills, he suggests that adults learn themselves and socialize in children skills, attitudes, and motivation appropriate to their ascribed social, occupational, and political roles. Both parents and schools are engaged in the socialization process.

For the purposes of fundamental change, then, what must take place is not further tinkering with classroom instruction, but the elimination of caste barriers and associated social, economic and political stratification in the society as a whole. What is required is the establishment of a new social order. Ogbu (1978b:358-360) summarizes:

> So long as caste remains the principle of social organization, no efforts to use the schools to equalize the social and occupational status of different minority and majority castes can succeed because the social system demands that both desirable and undesirable social and occupational positions be filled on an ascriptive basis. The schools therefore continue to prepare a disproportionate number of lower-caste groups for their traditional menial positions, although they may not do this consciously... To change this situation--to eliminate black academic retardation--requires, first a total destruction of the caste system--that is, the creation of a new social order in which blacks do not occupy a subordinate position vis-a-vis whites. If we destroy the caste system, both schools and blacks will begin to manifest changes compatible with the new social order, and academic retardation will disappear. Under the new social order, schools have no choice but to change their policies and practices and train blacks as effectively as they train whites because the new society will demand the same degree of competence from both. Destroying the caste system will have important consequences for blacks' response to schooling... Blacks will respond to their new opportunities by persevering in their schoolwork and by developing behavior patterns compatible with high academic achievement.

Other school ethnographers have also suggested that attention must be turned away from the school itself in order to achieve a lasting solution to contemporary educational dilemmas. Wilcox (1978, in press) makes a case similar to Ogbu's with respect to the successful education of lower middle class white children. Her data indicate that the distinction between caste and class status may be overdrawn. She documents the ways in which lower middle class children are socialized in schools in skills and attitudes appropriate to lower middle class work roles, while upper middle class children are socialized appropriately for upper middle class work roles, and suggests that this dynamic is not likely to change until stratification by class is eradicated.

Spindler's (1974c) work throws additional light on the role of the school in society. His data suggest that the school, when it does express values in opposition to dominant economic trends in situations of culture changes, has only limited influence on children's instrumental

choice-making activity. That is, children evidence an idealized identification with traditional values taught in the school, yet make practical choices affecting adult roles and life styles on the basis of modern urban values, whether or not those values are taught in school. It appears that in conditions of rapid social change when socialization in schools has not kept pace with larger economic realities, these economic realities are dominant nonetheless.

As we have seen, ethnographers have investigated schools and classrooms from the perspectives of both stability and change. They have focused on interactional dynamics in schools and classrooms; on relationships between school staff and parents; on the role of educational administrators; and on ways in which the assumptions, values and structures of the culture as a whole are expressed in the arena of schooling. They have illuminated the role of the school in perpetuating social stratification on the basis of class and ethnicity and have explored a number of dynamics which limit equal opportunity. With some understanding of how ethnographers have looked at schools and what they have seen, it is now time to discuss directly the kinds of policy implications which emerge from ethnographic research.

EDUCATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY AND POLICY-MAKING

Can the ethnography of schooling contribute to the policy-making process, and if so, how? The work already reviewed in this paper suggests certain answers to this question. However, the issue is quite complex, and there is considerable debate as to the appropriate role of ethnography in the policy-making context.

An ethnographic approach offers at least two primary strengths to policy makers. First, it is a methodological tool which is well suited to provide answers to questions which are currently posed by policy-makers but which cannot well be answered using strictly survey and quantitative methods. That is, it may provide clearer and fuller answers to already existing questions. One major way it can do this is by clarifying issues relating to the context and process of educational programs and change efforts (Finnan 1980, Herriott and Gross 1979, Berman and McLaughlin 1976).

We have witnessed in recent decades the introduction of a large number of change efforts within our schools. These efforts have generally been evaluated by the use of pre- and post-tests in designated areas of classroom instruction in an attempt to assess the success or failure of the reform. In the absence of any qualitative information on the process and context of program implementation, it has been impossible to actually explain the success or failure of a particular program. With mounting evidence of repeated program failure, it has become imperative to bolster our powers of explanation by adopting a methodology which is oriented towards ascertaining the meaning of an individual case.

An ethnographic approach can penetrate the meaning of an individual case in at least two ways. First, it can establish what the "treatment"

actually was in a program. Both Charters and Jones (1973) and Smith and Pohland (1974) describe the introduction of supposed "innovations" in school systems which, upon closer observation, proved not to have been introduced to any meaningful extent. The treatment may not be implemented at all, or it may be so transformed by the particular circumstances of the setting that it is not the same treatment found in other settings Erickson, personal communication; Herriott and Gross, 1979). A test of the effects of a treatment which has never actually been implemented is obviously extremely misleading. It is conceivable that potentially effective treatments have been discarded because of inadequate methods of investigating the adequacy of implementation. But most important is the fact that other evaluative styles do not enable one to ascertain whether the theory or the implementation of a "failed" reform effort was incorrect.

Ethnography can also penetrate the meaning of an individual case by enabling the tracing of actual causal linkages or relationships, both within the program and between the program and its institutional or community context. Detailed observation of the relevant field of forces and the interaction of these forces within the program or setting enables the ethnographer to develop theories of causal relationships and, in this way, to move beyond the limitations of correlational analysis (Erickson, personal communication; Gearing, personal communication). Ethnography can enrich current evaluative work by suggesting <u>why</u> a treatment has been successful or unsuccessful. (The use of ethnography in educational evaluation raises other issues which will be addressed at a later point.)

A second major strength of ethnography is its capacity to go beyond already existing questions to redefine or to transform the questions which are asked to render them more meaningful and potentially more powerful. This capacity emerges from at least three basic characteristics of the methodolgy: its holism, its attention to the fine detail of everyday life, and its cross cultural perspective. As implied in the previous paragraph, the fact that the ethnographer is looking in detail at a wide range of forces at work within a setting and is attempting to trace causal linkages often enables a new conceptualization of the problem. Rist's (1978) study of a desegregated school is a useful example. Attention toward the fine detail of everyday life may, as discussed earlier in the paper, enable the researcher to become aware of patterns of meaning, behavior and interrelationships which are not recognized in the body of common cultural knowledge about schooling. The removal of cultural blinders through cross-cultural knowledge and experience also facilitates "making the familiar strange" and arriving at a fresh set of questions or conceptualizations which may completely redefine the problem (see Ogbu, 1978).

These two strengths of ethnography, the capacity to address questions currently posed by policy makers which cannot easily be addressed by other methodologies, and the capacity to go beyond currently existing questions to redefine and transform the questions themselves, have very different kinds of implications for educational policy-making and for the field of anthropology. They imply a spectrum of approaches to research and to policy-making ranging from the relative fine-tuning involved in educational evaluation to a thoroughly global orientation to problem

conceptualization and to change. While each of these two types of research and problem-solving efforts contain within it the potential to speak in very useful ways to questions arising out of the other, they nonetheless can usefully be thought of as opposite poles of a spectrum. I will briefly discuss the policy implications of ethnographic work representing various positions along this specitrum.

Global Orientations to Change

A major result of the redefinition of the problem that often emerges from ethnographic research is that proposals for change generated by the research tend to be global. As an institution of cultural transmission, schooling is seen to be linked to and shaped by many other features of society. Therefore, to change the nature of schooling, it becomes necessary to change the nature of other relevant social institutions. For instance, as Ogbu (1978) suggests, to change fundamentally the level of success which black children exhibit in learning to read, it is necessary not to modify the established reading curriculum, but to destroy the caste system by removing the existence of barriers in the labor market to the economic success of black workers. He also suggests that the educational success of black children is dependent on the elimination of housing discrimination, on increasing the number of blacks who are political decision-makers and so on.

These kinds of far-reaching suggestions for educational change are likely to make policy-makers in small offices in large government buildings throw up their hands in dismay. As Mulhauser (1975) points out, the culture of policy-making in the U.S. is in direct conflict with

global proposals for change. In his view, the policy process is characterized, by among other things:

1) a focus on a specific issue, a desire to simplify the problem and to tease out discrete parts which are preferably similar to ones that have been attended to before;

2) a fractionated division of turf among agencies and communities which works against a holistic approach; and

3) an orientation to restricted sets of legal, fiscal, and administrative instruments of change.

These characteristics of the policy process are clearly incompatible with the thrust of much ethnographic work which calls for change in wider social institutions. Even if the calls for change were specific, the incompatibility would remain; it is even more pronounced when the calls for change are vague and appear so sweeping as to be unobtainable. The number of ethnographies which conclude with a vague sentence or two calling for drastic social change is enough to be embarrassing to one with a serious interest in educational policy.

Another problem is the politicized nature of policy-making. Mulhauser summarizes it as follows:

4) the need to negotiate the definition of the problem and relevant actors with other units of government; and

5) the need for immediate identification of politically viable levers of action, which emerges from the crisis-oriented nature of the policy process.

Policy-makers must live within the culturally defined political realities of the policy process. Ethnographers, on the other hand, may escape these realities, as they tend to live within the very different political realities of the university. In the university, ethnographers are faced with pressures to address their work to the scholarly community for the sake of career advancement. The bias in the scholarly community

against applied work is well known (Guba 1967). School ethnographers generally are not faced with the practical necessity of selling their proposals for change to anyone except academic colleagues who will evaluate their work on grounds other than its practical utility. They write for other academics, not for practitioners (Reynolds 1975). This is a problem which is characteristic of all educational research, although it is even more prominent in the case of ethnography due to its orientation to global types of change.

A crucial question arises here. Is the desire for research which will have immediate practical applicability a misguided threat to scientific advancement or a helpful push toward greater theoretical and methodological clarity? In the case of educational ethnography, I believe the latter formulation is closer to the truth. The sense of dismay at the lack of practical utility of ethnographic work is in part a reflection of the underdeveloped nature of this area of inquiry. The conceptual tools that ethnographers have to work with can best be described as orienting statements, not as solid theoretical propositions or models which make explicit statements about the relationships among phenomena (Spindler, private communication, Sindell 1969, Sanday 1976b). Until ethnographers are able to construct effective working models of the relationships among a complex set of phenomena, we are left in a sea of vaguery which is interesting but frustratingly unspecific. The push to provide specific information useful to the understanding and solution of specific problems can be a helpful one.

At the same time, other factors render the situation more complex. First, if one looks realistically at the development of fields of inquiry,

one must admit that increasing sophistication of research often leads to greater complexity rather than greater clarity, and that a state of increased confusion is not at all unreasonable to anticipate as time goes on (Rist 1977, Wallace 1976). Second, and most important, is that policy-makers will at some point have to come to grips with the holism which is an essential element of the ethnographic point of view and to transform their understandings of education and change if they are to utilize ethnographic findings fully. Until policy-makers come to understand the way in which their culture has mystified education and change, they will be unable to benefit from the most significant message that ethnographic work has to offer. Even if ethnographers become much more precise in their work, their research is still likely to point to the significance of wider institutional structures in understanding and changing what takes place within the classroom. The persistent articulation of a global approach to change is a vital contribution that ethnographers can make to educational change efforts. It may have little immediate impact on policy formulation, but is likely to play a crucial role over the long term.

Ultimately, a very interesting question arises. To what extent can a culture change as a result of the increasing awareness of its members of its own dynamics? Is it possible for ethnographers or those familiar with the results of ethnography to find a powerful medium and to demystify effectively the process of education and educational change for other members of the culture? Some of the results of ethnographic work have found their way into the cultural mainstream enough to make a significant impact on educational thought; the culture of poverty formulation arising

out of Oscar Lewis' work comes immediately to mind. However, Lewis' work can be and has been interpreted in a manner that is entirely consistent with cultural stereotypes and mystifications. The possible extent of permeation that is likely to be associated with work that sharply challenges the stereotypes is unclear. Many social theorists would not expect ideas to exert substantial influence when they are contradictory to existing social structures. Also, Mulhauser (1975) points out that cumbersome written ethnographies are not linked to any powerful media for alternate presentation. Nonetheless, the possibility of increasing degrees of cultural self-awareness remains intriguing, particularly as historical developments strain the credibility of the standard cultural view. Data gathered by academic ethnographers emphasizing the necessity of global types of changes may have an impact on policy-making either through its influence on the educational training of policy makers or its employment by educational consumers in their own lobbying and change efforts.

Change at the Classroom Level

What can ethnography contribute to the policy-making process in an immediate way short of changes in the culture and structure of policy-making and the conceptual and practical development of the field of educational ethnography? Proposals for specific changes at the classroom level have greater immediate appeal to many involved in educational change efforts. Ethnographers have focused at the classroom level as well as more globally, and have produced research which implies or proposes specific changes within classrooms. Much of this research has been conducted on the assumption that cultural differences are at the root

of the persistant failures of particular groups of children in school. The research falls within the "cultural conflict" tradition outlined earlier in the paper, while global proposals for change have generally emerged from the "cultural transmission" school of thought. The "conflict" researchers have conducted basic research and developed action programs to contribute toward the development of intercultural classrooms. This research can generally be considered to fall towards the midpoint of the spectrum described earlier in this section of the paper.

Ethnographers have documented the cultural domination of the classroom by one group to the exclusion of others in a variety of ways. Margaret Mead outlined the educational implications of cultural domination as long ago as 1943. In heterogeneous societies in which a dominant group considers its culture superior to those around it, education becomes an instrument of domination. Mead suggests that the situation shifts from that of a self-contained and self-respecting homogeneous society in which an individual needs to learn that which everyone agrees she/he would wish to know, to a situation of hierarchical domination in which someone wishes to teach something which it is not agreed anyone has any desire to know. The emphasis shifts from learning to teaching, and one observes the development of techniques of dry pedagogy and regimentation.

As noted previously, ethnographic work offers an indication of the extent of cultural domination in classrooms in the United States. The culturally dominant group is apparently best described both in terms of race and class: it is the group of white upper middle class Americans.

This group is culturally dominant in the sense that the classroom employs the language of this group, teaches the kinds of cognitive skills which tend to be employed by this group as working adults, teaches in the style in which learning takes place in the homes of people in this group, and exhibits a curriculum content reflecting the history and ideology of this group. Children from families of this group are accorded higher levels of status in the classroom and experience higher expectations for success from teachers by whom they are taught. This group also dominates the political structure surrounding the classroom in the sense that those who have the power to staff the school are generally members of this group, as are other educational decision-makers such as school board members and professional policy-makers. Also, parents from this group have more influence with school staff and administrators than do parents from other groups. The development of truly intercultural classrooms would involve dramatic changes in all of these areas.

Ethnographers working in this tradition have suggested that a number of areas of classroom life are in need of change and additional research. For instance, in an intercultural classroom, one might minimize the amount of linguistic domination of one group over another. Rist (1972a), for example, proposes that Black English become the dialect used in the early grades in black urban schools, with Standard English introduced as a second language. By the upper elementary grades, instruction would be conducted in Standard English since ultimately all children must learn English to be able to deal effectively with the society as a whole. Still, Rist suggests, children should not have to be bombarded by an entirely new dialect from the first day of their school experience.

There is considerable evidence that the types of cognitive skills taught in classrooms and the style in which cognitive skills are taught are those which are familiar to the dominant group. Effectively redesigning the curriculum and modes of teaching will require continued research as well as the incorporation of teachers from various cultures into the school system (that is, teachers who are not so acculturated that they have lost an awareness and appreciation of their own culture). Differences between school and home cultures still need to be understood and measured in some way (Burnett 1970, Sanday 1976b). A greater understanding of the ways in which various kinds of cognitive skills are associated with naturally occurring activities in varying cultural contexts is needed (Sanday 1976a), as well as of ways of successfully transferring the teaching of a particular cognitive skill from one cultural or activity context to another (Sanday 1976b). The work of Cole and his associates is particularly promising in this regard.

Various styles of learning need to be understood and integrated into the curriculum. The insights of Rist (1972a) and Cazden and John (1971) are suggestive here. Rist notes that, in the home setting, lower class black children remain on the periphery of adult groups, actively discouraged from participating in the adult communication system, yet understanding and learning from adult communication through a system of secondary learning. At school, by contrast, teachers employ a middle class style utilizing extensive direct one-to-one verbal communication. He suggests changing the manner of instruction from direct one-to-one interaction to secondary learning, ideally with adults talking to each other in the classroom. Cazden and John note that American Indian

children have highly developed skills in learning by looking as opposed to learning by verbal instruction, and suggest that those raised in this kind of culture may be able to research and design ways of integrating indigenous styles of learning into the school curriculum.

Substantial changes in classroom organization and resources may be necessary if children who come to school with different sorts of skills than those that are presently required in the classroom are to learn effectively. McDermott (1977) suggests that teachers must cease being pressured to turn out children of uniform skill levels by certain dates, and then to sort those who can make it from those who cannot. Children who come to school lacking certain skills must have extensive amounts of time to learn them, and must be able to take this time without being labelled slow or dull. Classrooms must be set up in such a way as to allow teachers to spend this time and to enable them to take on this difficult teaching task without undue strain. Current class sizes and teaching demands tend to make the strain unbearable.

On the other hand, some researchers suggest that there may be relatively small changes which make a difference, or, in Dell Hymes' terms, little differences that make a big difference. The work summarized by Au and Jordan (in press) indicates that it may be possible to locate junctures in interactional events where one may make a small change, essentially constructing a hybrid of two different cultural styles, which enables members of both cultural groups to participate comfortably and productively in the interaction. They report as one such example the development of a reading lesson in a Hawaiian classroom which is similar both to conventional classroom instruction and to native Hawaiian speech

events, and which appears to be associated with substantial increases in reading achievement on the part of Hawaiian children. The identification of critical points of least change that will make a change is work that can be undertaken by microethnographers through fieldwork and close analysis of audiovisual records (Erickson, personal communication).

Several of the major policy recommendations Rist (1978) arrived at as a result of his study of school desegregation exemplify the themes discussed in this section. He suggests the adoption of a truly multicultural, pluralist approach in which there is more than the token presence of a few minority pupils in each classroom; in which teachers have high expectations for minority students' academic success, rather than focusing predominantly on their behavior; in which the curriculum is changed to produce equal status experiences through the introduction of materials drawing on multiple human abilities and multiple cultures, and a non-competitive, individualized program of basic skills; and in which remedial programs are greatly expanded beyond current levels.

An important factor in the development of intercultural classrooms mentioned by Rist is the eradication of teacher stereotypes about the worth and competence of children from different backgrounds. Earlier sections of this paper have discussed ethnographic work indicating the existence of teacher stereotypes associated with student social class and ethnic background, and the ways in which these stereotypes act to raise or lower teacher expectations for students' performance. The differential transmission of expectations, skills, and attitudes must be eradicated if an intercultural classroom is to exist. Again, microethnographic work like Erickson's (1976) can enable increasingly precise

description of the interactions or transactions taking place between individuals, which is an essential step toward knowing precisely what it is that has to change.

In addition to performing basic research to understand and to document the existence of differential perceptions and expectations on the part of teachers and school administrators, ethnographers have begun to take important steps toward the development of action and training programs to combat this dynamic. The term "clinical ethnography" has been developed to describe attempts to help teachers and students retransact new classroom roles. Strategies include sharply focused instruments of self-observation (Gearing 1973a, Parsons 1970, Gearing and Hughes 1975) to enable the teacher to view analytically his/her behavior and to monitor changes in it over time, as well as more general training programs for teachers and administrators (Arvizu 1979, Khlief 1965, Spindler 1974d, Bohannon 1968, Leacock 1968, Redfield 1945). These include general exposure to sociocultural concepts relevant to understanding classroom behavior, sensitization to perceptual distortions likely to occur in situations of cross-cultural contact, and training teachers to act as field ethnographers in the classroom. The development of cross-cultural curriculum materials such as those produced at the Cross-culturual Resource Center at California State University, Sacramento is another type of contribution ethnographers have made. Much more work could be done to develop truly effective training programs enabling the development of intercultural classrooms. Theory in the anthropology of education is not yet sufficiently developed to enable effective practice.

The introduction of a truly pluralist program in schools would literally transform the culture of the school. The gaping chasm between home and school which exists for all groups except the dominant upper middle class would finally be bridged. Lightfoot (1978) stresses the tremendous importance of this kind of transformation in her discussion of families.

To return to an anthropological truism, the intercultural classroom cannot be conceived of in a vacuum. While ethnographers can continue to engage in the research and program development that would move us toward this goal, its ultimate institution depends not on research or program development but on external political realities. A dominant culture does not often take kindly to being unseated, especially when it controls such valuable instruments of socialization and gatekeeping as the schools (LaBelle 1979). It would be foolish to portray the problem as simply one of accumulating sufficient know-how. The establishment of intercultural classrooms is not the introduction of a modest reform. It would be not only a substantial technical accomplishment but also a political accomplishment, and this cannot be ignored in thinking about its implementation.

As Rist (1972b) points out, schools (and by implication educational policy-makers) have done all a disservice by continuing to maintain that they can meet public expectations with modest reforms, and by transforming political issues relating to the structure and practices of the school into administrative matters solved by minor programmatic change. While implementation of the changes proposed above undoubtedly would be difficult, implementation of some of them certainly would not be impossible. Moreover, changes within the classroom itself tend

to be more compatible with the policy-making context than do the more global types of changes discussed earlier in the paper. The macro-structural and micro-interactional approaches to change are clearly complementary rather than contradictory approaches, and neither one should be dismissed as irrelevant (Clement 1978).

Further integration of the two approaches seems to be the most promising strategy on both practical and theoretical grounds. The micro-interactional or microethnographic approach has been critiqued by Ogbu on the basis that it relies too heavily on the assumption that cultural differences are the key to explaining educational failure. Ogbu (in press) points out that cultural differences do not seem to pose substantial barriers to educational success for children of immigrant minorities such as Chinese, Cubans, Fillippinos, Japanese, and Koreans or for children in less industrialized societies. He suggests that broad social structural and historical factors must be relied on ultimately to explain the school success and failure of various groups of children. Structural factors, in his view, render cultural differences either a relatively minor hindrance or a major obstacle to school success. On the other hand, the work of Au and Jordon (in press) indicates that minimizing cultural conflict may have substantial impact on childrens' school performance. It is not clear that truly intercultural classrooms have yet been introduced to the educational scene, so that their effects could be tested. Both macroethnography and microethnography clearly seem necessary to address the wide range of dynamic impacting on school performance.

Evaluation Research

In addition to conducting basic research relevant to proposing changes in the classroom, ethnographers have recently begun to engage in what is known as evaluation research. In this type of research, the ethnographer is hired to complete a study which will have some sort of direct evaluative impact on a particular program. The federal government has, in recent years, begun to show interest in and to fund ethnographic evaluation efforts, both in education and in other areas. However, there is little agreement among ethnographers as to the appropriateness of the evaluative context for ethnographic work. Serious ethical and professional issues have been raised.

Since there is no uniform style in which evaluative research is conducted, it is difficult to generalize about its problems and prospects. Also, the complete results of several major evaluative efforts have not yet been published. A number of general concerns have been voiced, however, about the extent to which ethnographic evaluation is able to meet standards of professional adequacy (Chambers 1977, Angrosino 1976).

The open-ended nature of ethnographic research is seen to be threatened by the pre-determination of the problem inherent in contract research. In asking a researcher to evaluate the functioning of a particular program, the funding agency has limited the scope of focus to a much greater extent than is usual in traditional ethnographic research. And the constraints may extend even further, to requests to gather specific kinds of data or to employ or focus on specific categories in one's research. Apple (1974) questions whether one can study the real outcomes and processes of educational programs when one's research uses categories and

data derived from and serving the institution itself.

A second problem is the time frame available in evaluative research. While some research contracts have permitted very long time frames--for instance, the five year span of the rural Experimental Schools project carried out by Abt Associates--most contract research is likely to involve shorter time frames than traditional ethnographic research. There is heightened concern for cost effectiveness and for achieving results, as opposed to concern for the elegance of the research process itself. Yet time is what ethnographers rely on to produce valid data--time to observe events again and again until one is relatively certain one has viewed all the various permutations. The label "quick and dirty" has often been applied to evaluation research.

A third problem mentioned by those who have engaged in evaluation research is the possible intrusion of government agency bureaucrats into the research process, interfering with various aspects of the design and execution of the research, for instance, taking an action which threatens rapport with people at the research site (Colfer 1976).

A fourth problem is that ethnographers must rely extensively on rapport to gather data, yet their status as evaluators makes rapport difficult to establish. This and other difficulties are reviewed extensively by Knapp (in press).

Ethical problems also abound. In an evaluative study it is virtually impossible to promise confidentiality to informants, and one's research may result in direct harm to various individuals in the setting. Yet ethnographic field work relies on the development of friendly relations with people in the setting which tends to imply good will and

protection from harm. In addition, it may be impossible to escape some sort of judgmental stance; yet the aim of ethnographic work for many years has been to avoid judgment of the people among whom one does one's research. A still more serious problem may arise when ethnographers begin working directly for the state in what could be considered a colonial enterprise. As Spindler has put it, ethnography gathers the secrets of others, usually only half understood by the people themselves, and makes them available to individuals of varying good will and ethical standard (personal communication). Researchers have a very serious responsibility, when collecting information which may be used against a group of (usually relatively powerless) people, to examine with extreme care the ends for which the information is likely to be used. These examples should be sufficient to illustrate the kinds of tensions evident in the marriage of ethnography and evaluation. Several authors have set out procedures to minimize these tensions (Herriott 1977, Knapp, in press, Burns 1976, Everhart 1975) while others consider them fatal (Spindler, personal communication).

Some have expressed a more positive view of ethnographic evaluation efforts (Clark, 1975). Apple (1974) sharply criticizes the standard psychological approach to evaluation, and suggests that an ethnographic approach could contribute toward a necessary reorientation of the field from the evaluation of classroom "learning" to institutional evaluation, in which the whole of the student experience is assessed. Jackson (1974) also emphasizes the value of an increased scope of investigation in evaluation, and anticipates that an ethnographic approach would encourage this. Britan (1978) suggests that ethnography has a central role to

play in the evaluation of many action programs. He notes that many programs are characterized by multiple goals, fuzzy theory, and diffuse results, and therefore can most effectively be evaluated through a contextual approach. As Britan points out, a contextual model can encompass the multi-dimensional complexity of actual program processes, whereas an experimental model is appropriate only if an action program's goals are explicit, its underlying theory clear, its expected results specific, and its inputs unitary, and if it is isolated from similar efforts or change processes. Knapp (in press) suggests that the open-ended approach of ethnography, its attention to the meaning system of the group under study, and its focus on subtle interactions between program and context make it extremely likely that an ethnographic approach, even one reduced in scope, is likely to produce valuable data which other approaches miss. An ethnographic approach may increase the receptivity of program personnel to evaluation, given the personal nature of the contact (as opposed to impersonal paper-and-pencil surveys (Fitzsimmons 1975)) and the potentially increased likelihood of a more empathic understanding of the setting and more flexible ways of measuring outcomes (Knapp, in press). The tendency of ethnography to make the commonplace problematic and therefore interesting again can do a great deal to improve morale at the local level (as well as at the policy-making level) (Erickson, personal communication). And the ethnographic mode is well suited to ongoing program modification efforts at specific sites.

Finally, to restate one of the main points with which this section began, ethnography is extremely well suited to the investigation of

program context and process, which is essential to the interpretation of strictly quantitative assessments of program effectiveness. By offering rich qualitative descriptions of the dynamics and consequences of reform efforts, ethnography can make an important contribution to the dialectical development of knowledge among policy-makers.

Colfer (1976) concludes that, although a close affiliation with the federal bureaucracy is likely to pose major dilemmas for ethnographic research, escape is not the answer. She suggests that a refusal to participate in potentially useful research efforts because of a fear of ethical or professional dilemmas is also unethical and irresponsible. Pelto and Pelto (1978) concur that there exists a need for information which someone must supply. It seems clear that ethnographers do have much to contribute in terms of a distinctive methodology which can provide useful information about particular programs to decision-makers. A fear of acquiring "dirty hands," or of damaging disciplinary integrity, is understandable but not necessarily appropriate.

At the same time, there is a real need to maintain an essentially "ethnographic" quality in the work done in the name of ethnographic evaluation. Research which can be linked to no theoretical problem, which focuses only on pre-determined categories, which is conducted in a very brief period of time, which uses ready-make instruments, and soon, simply cannot be considered ethnographic. A growing body of "purported" ethnography is likely to do real harm both to the discipline of anthropology and to the search for new and useful educational knowledge (Spindler personal communication, Rist 1980).

As several people point out (Angrosino 1976, Knapp in press, Chambers 1977) what may emerge in the context of evaluative research may not look like ethnography as it tends to be taught in graduate school. The research effort should perhaps be called a different name, but an evaluative research methodology inspired by ethnography and preserving important features of the ethnographic tradition may make a special contribution to addressing social problems and to our knowledge of social processes in general. The content of graduate training programs in anthropology should be reconsidered in light of this legitimate social and professional need.

The Scientific Acceptability of Ethnographic Research

A final comment must be made about potential barriers to the scientific acceptability of ethnographic research by educational decision-makers. A long standing concern on the part of those trained in other disciplines has been the apparent lack of generalizability and reliability in the ethnographic case study approach. They question how one can establish a general policy on the basis of a study of one school of one classroom carried out by one observer.

Qualitative and quantitative research emerge from two entirely different sets of assumptions about causality, about method and about proof. The dominance of the quantitative paradigm encourage a view of qualitative work as subjective and "unscientific;" however, it is much more accurate to recognize the two paradigms as radically different but equally defensible approaches to understanding (Bruyn 1963, Erickson 1977, Geertz 1973, Rist 1977, Wilson 1977). Space does not permit a full discussion of this point. However, it looks as if we are on the threshold

of a move from, in Rist's (1977) words, disdain to detente with regard to these two paradigms. It is vital to remember that the standards of adequacy and of proof that are applicable to one paradigm are not appropriate to the other.

It is interesting to note that several researchers have compared results obtained from participant observation and key informant interviewing against various types of survey data obtained in the same setting (Campbell 1955, Vidich and Shapiro 1955). Very strong correspondence between data gathered by various methods is evident. This kind of work, and the continued attention directed by anthropologists to the development of the ethnographic method, indicates that ethnography is a solid research tool which is neither journalistic nor anecdotal.

At the same time, perhaps because of the relative insulation of the field, anthropologists have tended more than other social scientists to ignore (sometimes to a shocking extent) the expectations of those working within the standard scientific paradigm. As Sanday (1976b) and Erickson (1976) note, research results in educational anthropology are far more likely to be used to bring about change than work in other areas of cultural anthropology, and therefore it is even more incumbent on researchers working in this area to ensure the scientific acceptability of the methodologies they employ. It would be tragic to have particular methodological weaknesses act as a barrier to the acceptance of the results of ethnographic work.

While a large sample size may be irrelevant to determining the meaning of a single case, it becomes more important for the making of national or regional educational policy. Also, the characteristic reliance on a single observer makes it difficult to demonstrate reliability of results.

It is clear that the methodology of ethnography can develop to adopt certain elements of traditional scientific rigor without compromising its basic thrust. Rist (1979) has suggested that we have begun to develop methodologies appropriate for forty-to-sixty site studies, as evidenced by work conducted at Far West Regional Laboratories; whether or not this is yet the case, some kind of development in this direction is not unlikely in the future. The advantages in terms of generalizability are clear. The academic prejudice against the replication of previous studies is a serious impediment to the generalizability of ethnographic results, as individual case studies can only gain greater generalizability by replication. Fienberg (1977) discusses ways to expand the n in case studies by converting the basic unit of measurement to events within the classroom or setting, which drastically enlarges the n even in single case studies. Wilcox's (1978) and Erickson's (1976) work exemplifies this approach. Erickson also provides an excellent example of the use of more than one observer and coder to increase reliability. Burnett's 1968 research employed a random sampling technique compatible with ethnographic investigation. These kinds of developments are all important steps toward the greater acceptability of ethnographic data, and it seems very likely that future research will employ these techniques to a greater and greater extent. At the same time, ethnographers have resisted and must continue to resist the pressure completely to transform their work to fit the traditional quantitative scientific paradigm. Otherwise, the distinctive contribution of open-ended qualitative research will be lost.

CONCLUSION

Earlier sections of this paper have discussed the characteristics of ethnography as a methodology and have outlined ways in which particular educational topics with direct relevance to educational governance and decision-making have been explored ethnographically. The review of ethnography as a methodology for researching educational issues conducted in this paper reveals both strengths and weaknesses of the ethnographic approach, as well as areas of articulation and disarticulation between ethnography and educational policy-makers, as I have indicated at various points in the paper.

The power of any methodology to generate significant data is limited by the level of development of the theory out of which the methodology arises and which informs its use. Ethnography is a particularly acute tool for gathering in depth data about the workings of complex social settings. Ethonography as a research tool provides an excellent vehicle for answering a wide range of questions relating to such settings. The questions themselves, however, arise inevitably in large part from theory as it has been developed to a given point in time. The ethnography of schooling has, to date, been conducted on the basis of a general set of orienting statements about the nature of cultural transmission and the role of schools in society (Spindler 1976). The orienting statements which have guided research have been extremely important in that they have consistently contradicted the dominant technocratic approach to education (Eddy 1978, Wolcott 1977). We have gained important general insights about schooling from the research conducted around these orienting

statements. However, ethnographic inquiry about schooling must move beyond this point if it is to have a significant ongoing impact on educational policy. We need to develop a conceptual model of the process of cultural transmission which will eventually enable us actively to use the process of cultural transmission rather than passively to watch it take place. The acquisition and transmission of cultural knowledge are certainly key areas upon which we need to focus. Until we are able to facilitate the acquisition of various kinds of cultural knowldege by various kinds of students and to transform that which is being transmitted to them, the policy impact of an ethnographic approach to education, though not insignificant, will be limited. Research aimed at both the macro-structural and micro-interactional levels is crucial for expanding our understanding. Of course, it is essential to note that gains in understanding must be accompanied by political action and a kind of transformation of the political culture of the United States for any meaningful educational change to take place.

The primary strengths of the ethnographic approach, and the areas of educational policy in which it can be most useful, are, I believe, as follows, in order of importance:

1. Problem of definition, including the understanding of processes of change.
2. The development of action programs based on basic research.
3. Program implementation, evaluation and modification.

Ethnographies of education produced to date testify to the importance of the contribution which ethnography can make to the conceptualization and definition of educational problems. The cross-cultural perspective, the understanding of culture and cultural conflict, the

orientation to context, the open-ended scope of research, the attempt at description, and the fine-grained nature of analysis together make a distinctive and fresh contribution to educational thought. The cross-cultural perspective has the potential of enabling the researcher to set aside the cultural blinders that constrain one's view, and to explore the familiar as if it were strange. The ensuing fine-grained attempt to describe what one sees and the context which surrounds it make ethnography an excellent tool for the development of hypotheses about educational organizations, institutions and processes. Ethnography is extremely well-suited to problem definition in education.

Ethnographic description and analysis of change processes can be extremely useful in the areas of problem definition and program development and implementation. The power of careful in-depth description of the processes, antecedents and consequences of change efforts to enable more effective policy-making is substantial. On-site ethnographic analysis can serve to draw attention to the available levers of change (Rist 1979) and to clarify critical factors in effective implementation. Analysis of the role of the school in society, as well as on-site ethnographic analysis, may serve to discourage the development and implementation of programs which are unlikely to contribute to change.

The development of curriculum, organizational structures, and training programs facilitating the emergence of a truly intercultural classroom has the potential for making a tremendous contribution to educational change. This will involve both the continuation of basic research and the development of specific action programs informed by this research.

Finally, some modified form of academic ethnography may make substantial contributions to program evaluation and ongoing program modifications. Anticipated and unanticipated outcomes may be identified and defined much more precisely than has been possible in the past. Also, the relatively long time frames of ethnographic investigation may be well suited to the development of some kind of ongoing dialogue for the purposes of program modification. Ethnography is infinitely more suited to this purpose than is the hit-and-run pre-test/post-test approach to doing research (Rist 1979).

The strengths of ethnography will not be fully realized until:

1. Sound theory is developed in future ethnographic research;
2. Attention is increasingly directed toward the practical application of basic research;
3. The methodological soundness of much ethnographic work is improved;
4. Attention is directed toward the adaptation of the ethnographic approach to the purposes of program evaluation and modification; and
5. The culture of policy-making becomes more amenable to the holistic view presented in ethnographic work.

None of the obstacles to the effective development and utilization of educational ethnography listed above are insignificant. The challenge is substantial, but the reward--actual progress toward the effective resolution of persisting educational problems--is more than sufficient to spur our efforts.

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